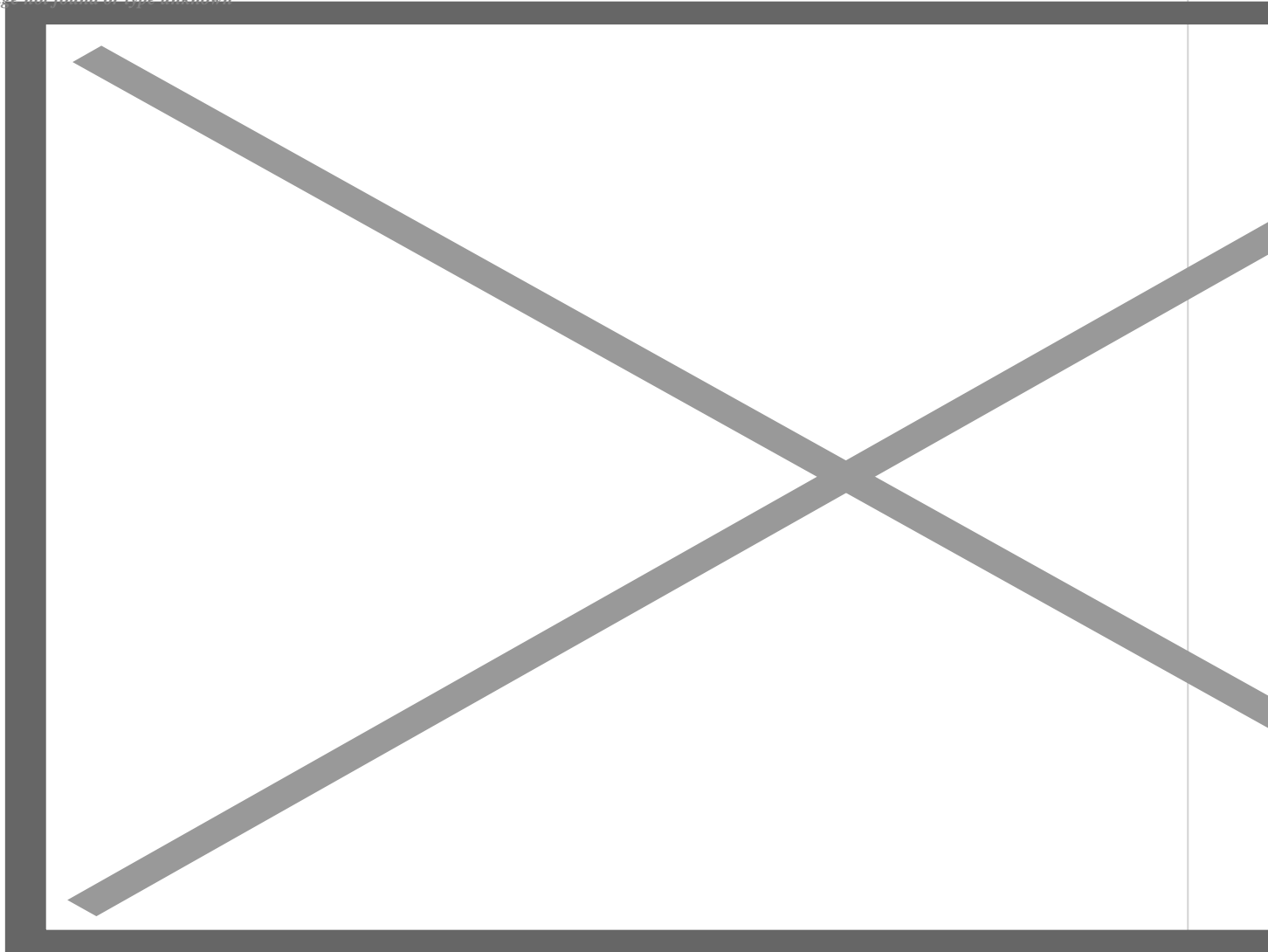


Iran says unilateral sanctions symbol of crime against humanity

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Iran's Ambassador to the UN Majid Takht-Ravanchi. (Photo: Press TV)

Tehran, November 28 (RHC)-- Iran's UN ambassador has denounced as "a crime against humanity" the unilateral sanctions imposed by self-proclaimed Western advocates of human rights on certain countries, calling on the international community to take immediate action to help lift the restrictive measures.

Majid Takht-Ravanchi made the remarks during an address to the United Nations Security Council's Arria-Formula meeting, dubbed "End Unilateral Coercive Measures Now." He said that the coercive measures, including sanctions, disrupt access to financial systems, foreign reserves and even food and medicine.

The bans, he added, also target children and patients as well as the elderly and the poor, leading to dire humanitarian consequences that could turn into a humanitarian crisis.

Western states claim that medicine, food and other humanitarian supplies are exempt from the so-called smart sanctions, but the reality is that the bans do the most harm to the innocent people and the vulnerable, the Iranian envoy further said.

The imposition of sanctions during the coronavirus epidemic is a very dangerous move as the countries' safety is interconnected since the virus can spread and claim many lives, he said. Takht-Rvanchi also slammed sanctions as a collective punishment for all people and economic terrorism, which amounts to a real war with the economy being used as a weapon.

By any criteria, unilateral sanctions are "inhumane, immoral, illegal and an obvious symbol of a crime against humanity," he stressed, urging the international community to take immediate action to secure the removal of the bans.

Referring to the sanctions imposed by the US against the Islamic Republic over the past 40 years, the ambassador said Iran now faces the most extensive sanctions ever slapped on a country. The anti-Iran sanctions have severely hampered the country's battle against the coronavirus outbreak, he said. Additionally, they violate the principles of freedom of trade and navigation.

Takht-Rvanchi said the inhumane sanctions have prevented Iran from using its financial resources abroad for trade in humanitarian items, including medicine and medical equipment needed to contain the coronavirus and treat patients.

Imposed by the countries that claim to be the leading advocates of human rights, the sanctions target the people's rights to a decent living standard, proper health and welfare, he added.

Iran has been under a series of illegal sanctions imposed by the US since 2018, when President Donald Trump withdrew Washington from the 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

The U.S. unleashed the so-called maximum pressure campaign and targeted the Iranian nation with the "toughest ever" restrictive measures. In recent months, Washington has been tightening its oppressive sanctions against the Islamic Republic, defying warnings from Tehran and international human rights organizations that the restrictions are hindering the Iranian health sector's fight against the coronavirus pandemic.



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